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# MANAGEMENT COUNCIL NEWSLETTER

U.S. DEPT. OF AGRICULTURE  
U. S. Department of Agriculture

A summary of significant events of  
interest to USDA management

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MINORITY BUSINESS ENTERPRISE.....The Assistant Secretary for Administration has accepted the chairmanship of the Special Projects Committee of the Interagency Council for Minority Business Enterprise. Senior level officials from 19 Federal agencies will serve as representatives on this Special Committee. USDA agencies will be called upon to assist the Committee in achieving the objectives.

The Committee objectives are:

- ...To develop special programs that increase the effectiveness of the Federal minority business assistance effort.
- ...To coordinate Federal programs and resources that impact upon long and short-term economic conditions which affect the viability of minority-owned businesses.
- ...To coordinate Federal programs and resources that result in increased numbers, sizes, and types of business opportunities for minority entrepreneurs.

The Assistant Secretary said he is convinced that, with your cooperation, this Department can make a worthwhile contribution to this national effort which will have lasting beneficial effects for minority business entrepreneurs. (Contact: J. Fred King, OEO, ext. 77117)

WASHINGTON SPACE CONSULTANT CONTRACT.....Phase I of the Washington space contract has been completed. The contractor has delivered current space assignment drawings covering the existing situation and including adjacency requirements matrices. The next major step following refinement and validation of utilization data is development of an "ideal" adjacency plan followed by a "real world" plan based on known constraints and pending changes. (Contact: Bill Hamilton, OO, ext. 73141)

REEMPLOYED ANNUITANTS.....Effective October 1, 1976, one of the new amendments to the Retirement Law requires that Agencies reimburse the Civil Service Retirement and Disability Fund in the amount of an individual's monthly annuity when they reemploy a retired civil servant. Previously, the agency paid the reemployed annuitant only the difference between the person's annuity and the rate for the job being filled, and paid nothing to the retirement fund. (Contact: Verna Deane Brown, OP, ext. 73641)

FNS POSSIBLE MOVE TO BUZZARD POINT.....In response to USDA's request in January 1976, GSA last week offered USDA 150,000 square feet of office space in the new office building at Buzzard Point. The space is currently under review and assessment for possible use by the Food and Nutrition Service. (Contact: George Knapp, OO, ext. 73937)

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FOREST SERVICE CIVIL RIGHTS MEETING.....A Servicewide Forest Service civil rights meeting was held in Alexandria, Va. on October 18-22. The Assistant Secretary for Administration addressed the group of more than 100 participants and stressed the need for more realistic and progressive civil rights action in the context of what can be done.

The Chief of the Forest Service, said that "In the area of civil rights, good intentions are not enough. They will not insure equal opportunity... Let's create an action plan that will transform yesterday's good intentions into a concrete reality for tomorrow."

At the conclusion of the 5-day meeting, a proposed Civil Rights Action Plan was presented to the Assistant Secretary for Administration, other Department officials, and the Forest Service Chief and Staff. Rex Resler, Forest Service Associate Chief, promised immediate action and aggressive follow-up on the Plan. (Contact: John Deinema, FS, ext. 76707)

APPLICATION REVIEW BOARD PROCEDURES.....Memoranda have been distributed to each member of the Management Council requesting a copy of their agency's application review board procedures. These procedures were to have been completed by October 15 for all agencies with ADP expenditures exceeding \$1 million. (Contact: H.W. Meetze, ADS, ext. 76275)

REPORT ON BROOK'S HEARINGS PUBLISHED.....In June 1976, Congressman Brooks, Chairman, Government Operations Committee, held a three-day hearing on ADP procurement within the Federal Government. The report of this hearing entitled "Procurement of ADP Resources by the Federal Government" was released this month. A major recommendation of the Government Operations Committee is that ADP budgeted obligations be identified by separate line item in each Department budget. (Contact: H.W. Meetze, ADS, ext. 76275)

HOUSE STAFFS BRIEFED ON COMPUTER PROCUREMENT.....On October 20, the Assistant Secretary for Administration, the Associate Director of FmHA, and the Director of ADS briefed staff members from the office of Congressmen Moss and Rose on the Kansas City/St. Louis Computer Center competitive procurement and FmHA's Unified Management Information System. This matter is currently under discussion with OMB. (Contact: H.W. Meetze, ADS, ext. 76275)

SALARY COMPRESSION.....The recent action taken by Congress in an amendment to the legislative appropriation bill blocked the October 1976 pay increase for Executive Levels plus members of Congress and Federal Judges. By law, employees in the General Schedule may not be paid at a rate in excess of the rate of basic pay for Executive Level V. By congressional action, however, the Executive Level V pay rate will remain at the current \$37,800 annual salary, while certain General Schedule employees will receive \$39,600.

Approximately 615 employees (GS-15-18 and equivalent) will receive an annual salary of \$39,600. This salary is higher than that for Executive Level V positions and is only \$300 less than the salary for Executive Level 4 positions. Of these 615 employees, 318 are in steps 7-10 of GS-15. In addition, there are about 382 GS-15's in steps 5 and 6 who will receive more than \$37,800, but less than \$39,600. (Contact: Verna Deane Brown, OP, ext. 73641)



FY 77 AND 78 EMPLOYMENT CEILINGS.....The Department's request for employment ceilings for FY 77 and 78 was transmitted to OMB on October 15. OMB's response to the Department's request is expected in mid-November. (Contact: Bob Sherman, OMF, ext. 76176)

OMF HEARINGS ON FY 78 DEPARTMENT ESTIMATES.....OMB examiners have completed hearings with USDA agencies regarding the FY 78 budget estimates. The OMB Director's mark-up is currently scheduled for the first week in November with Presidential review in mid-November. OMF allowances for the FY 78 budget should be available to the agencies in the fourth week in November.

Once allowances are received, the entire Department will have very stringent deadlines for preparation and review of revised budget estimates. Support by program management and staff officials at all levels throughout the Department will be essential to assure that sufficient priority is placed on the timely preparation of revisions to the 1978 budget estimates. (Contact: Bob Sherman, OMF, ext. 76176)

OEO COMPLIANCE REVIEW PROJECT.....OEO's Compliance and Enforcement Division (CED) is holding a series of meetings with agency personnel to discuss CED's evaluation of agency civil rights compliance programs and to reach agreement on recommendations and proposed actions. Meetings have already been held with FNS and SCS.

At the conclusion of the agency meetings in mid-November, CED will issue final reports to agency administrators and will assist in the development of new agency compliance review procedures. CED will also continue to monitor their implementation. (Contact: Richard J. Peer, OEO, ext. 77327)

PROFESSIONAL PROCUREMENT.....13 USDA employees have been certified as Certified Professional Contracts Managers (CPCM) by the National Contract Management Association (NCMA). Certifications are awarded only to highly qualified government and private sector personnel and about 2,500 certifications have been made nationwide by NCMA. The 13 USDA employees who received certification are: Ed Marshall, APHIS; Roxy Coleman, FNS; Frank Gearde, FNS; Jim Sobel, FNS; Bob Bryan, SCS; Lacy Arnold, OO; Paul Denett, OO; Pat Havey, OO; Art Langer, OO; Don Manns, OO; Lou Perrygo, OO; Dean Smith, OO; and Bob Welch, OO. (Contact: Dean Smith, OO, ext. 77527)

PUBLIC BULDINGS SERVICE REGIONAL COMMISSIONERS MEETING.....The Assistant Secretary for Administration met with GSA's Public Building Service Regional Commissioners in New Hampshire on October 7. He presented a paper concerning problems that USDA has with GSA operations, policies, and service. He cited specific examples of USDA difficulties, particularly in connection with leases in rural areas. GSA said they will respond to each of the cases presented. (Contact: George Knapp, OO, ext. 73937)

USDA RESPONSES TO GAO REPORTS.....The Office of Audit is responsible for following up with USDA agencies to assure that prompt replies to GAO reports are made to the House and Senate Committees on Government Operations. The Legislative Reorganization Act requires that replies be made within 60 days of the report date.

There have been several instances in the last six months where this 60-day time limit has not been met. In the most recent case, OA had to request two extensions. Problems generally occur when one agency is responsible for coordinating a joint reply for several agencies. Replies need clearance through OMF for overall Departmental policy and budgetary impact. Delays also often result from unnecessary written communication between agency representatives, OMF and Assistant Secretaries. Personal contacts and meetings would probably result in faster resolution of differences and more timely replies. (Contact: Frank Reynolds, OA, ext. 75215)

USDA RAPID RETRIEVAL SYSTEM.....Initial input of reports from most USDA agencies have been entered into the RAPID system. When construction of library space at NAL is completed, in about 2 weeks, the centralized retrieval system will be fully operations.

To date, there has been only a limited number of requests for reports (FAS and APHIS). Other agencies should note that the system is working and available to them. (Contact: Warren Seitz, OA, ext. 77805)

PERSONNEL INTERCHANGE PROCESS (PIP).....The PIP program is designed to provide on-the-job developmental experiences for selected GS-13 to 16's through permanent assignments, details, task force assignments, or special projects on an interagency basis. Twelve participants are currently in the PIP program. (Contact: John W. Kizler, OP, ext. 76977)

GSA LEASE PRIORITIES.....Agencies have provided listings of lease priorities for GSA action. Agency recommendations are being reviewed in the Office of the Secretary, and the Department's priorities will be forwarded to GSA the first week in November.

The need for priority listings is based on GSA's limited lease authority in FY 77 as discussed in the Management Council Newsletter of October 15, 1976. (Contact: George Knapp, OO, ext. 73937)

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USDA ADP FALL A-11 CALL.....USDA's Fall A-11 submission concerning data processing was made to the Office of Management and Budget on October 15. This submission shows FY 76 actual obligations of \$70 million and obligations of \$87 million and \$107 million for FY 77 and 78 respectively. A rather substantial amount of the FY 77 dollars includes adjustments made by several agencies to more accurately reflect their real data processing costs. The major reason for the significant change of FY 78 over FY 77 is an estimated \$11 million increase proposed by FmHA for support of their Unified Management Information System. Agency submissions are now being reviewed by the Office of the Secretary. (Contact: H.W. Meetze, ADS, ext. 76275)